



Los Angeles County Commission on Local Governmental Services

383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012
(213) 974-1431 Fax (213) 633-5102

MINUTES

Meeting of May 6, 2003
830 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Chairperson
Richard J. Rosenthal, CRE

Vice-Chairperson
Patricia G. Gray
Wendy M. Brogin,
A.I.C.P.
Walter P. Coombs
Shana E. Epstein.
Gordon Gray
Rodrigo A. Guerra, Jr.
Algird Leiga
Sharon Martinez
Deborah H. O'Connor
Kenneth D. Rozell
William Selditz
David Spence
Terri Tippit
Benjamin "Frank" Venti

Chairperson Rosenthal called the meeting order at 9:39 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR APRIL 1, 2003

On motion of Commissioner Lee, seconded by Commissioner Gray, the Commission unanimously approved the April 1, 2003 minutes.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Chairperson Rosenthal announced that the Commission will not meet on July 1, 2003 and November 4, 2003.

UPDATE ON THE COMMISSION SUNSET REVIEW PROCESS WITH REGARD TO BYLAWS AND CHARTER

Commissioner Rozell reported the Commission has two years remaining in its sunset review process. Commission topics during this period included traffic congestion, LAFCo reform, island annexation, spheres of influence, water governance/water supply, the San Fernando Valley secession movement, the Puente Hills Landfill, permit streamlining, and emergency preparedness. He recommended that the Commission examine the issues it plans to review in the next two years and determine if they conform to the charter provisions. He also recommended that the Commission consider appointing a subcommittee to review the Commission's charter and develop recommendations to update the charter as needed.

Chairperson Rosenthal requested staff distribute the last sunset review and the Commission's activity report. He also requested Commissioners consider appropriate areas for expansion of the Commission's authority and be prepared to review the sunset review materials and make recommendations at the August meeting.

GRANT DISTRIBUTION PROCESS FOR EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FUNDS

Bob Garrett, Assistant General Manager, County Office of Emergency Preparedness, Mr. Garrett provided the Commissioners with a handout entitled "Operational Area Grant Overview" and an applicant's packet for the [Fiscal Year '03] State Homeland Security Grant Program (copies on file). He discussed the management of anti-terrorism related grant programs, the type of grants available, Federal and State guidance regarding the distribution and the funding impact it has on the County and local cities. Mr. Garrett provided a breakdown of the funding to date and proposed funding. He reported that most

funding received from the federal government is sent to the State, which inserts its own guidance and then sends it to the counties, who prepare their own guidance prior to granting funds to local cities. Mr. Garrott stated that California receives the lowest per capita grant funding from the federal government and Los Angeles County receives the lowest per capita funding from the State.

Chairperson Rosenthal inquired whether the funding is distributed without regard to need or proposed use. Mr. Garrott explained that at federal and state levels, funds are distributed on a population plus basis, but the County disburses funds based on a prioritized assessment of the need, threat, and vulnerability.

Commissioner Brogin inquired about proposed changes in the federal government's distribution of anti-terrorism grants to states and the way the State distributed the grants. Mr. Garrott stated the current method of distribution allows the State to set its priorities first. Currently, funds are distributed through the Office of Emergency Services in Sacramento.

Chairperson Rosenthal inquired who provides input in the establishment of the County's grant priorities. Mr. Garrott reported that it is an approval authority consisting of top fire and police officials for the County and City of Los Angeles. He reported that the federal distribution is geared to the first responders with deadlines for applying for funds. The Office of Homeland Security provides states with grants. The federal government requires the first responders to make purchases and then file a claim to receive funds.

Commissioner Coombs inquired if the funds could be used to finance private organizations dealing with emergency situations. Mr. Garrott stated that companies that provide contract services to governmental agencies may be eligible.

There is a planning task force comprised of agencies from the federal government to municipalities who review guidance priorities and threat assessments. The County is divided into eight disaster management areas and the coordinator of the disaster areas sits on the task force council. Currently, the Office of Emergency Preparedness receives funding for first responders' equipment, training, and staffing. This task force determines priorities. The County has a centralized online application process for cities applying for funding.

Chairperson Rosenthal thanked Mr. Garrott for his informative review of the anti-terrorism grant process and invited Mr. Garrott to keep the Commission apprised of any updates.

PRELIMINARY INFORMATION ON 911 CALL DISPATCH

Commissioner Gibson introduced Stephen Fryer, Solutions Consultant E911, SBC California, who provided the Commission with a preliminary overview of the "911" system within the County.

Mr. Fryer reviewed the system's ability to interpret and handle a "911" call. At present, SBC and Verizon handle the majority of "911" system calls for the State. Verizon serves the coastal cities "911" calls and SBC serves the inland communities. He stated that the maximum time that it takes for a call to get to a PSAP (Public Safety Answer Point) location where the call is answered is three seconds.

Mr. Fryer reported that various Management Services Packages are available for agencies to purchase along with "911" equipment to enhance their ability to answer and log incoming calls. Only the managers at these agencies are aware of the real time frame for answering these calls. There are 150 PSAPs in the County and these sites are constantly monitored to ensure that the system is functioning correctly. SBC monitors its "911" calls at the California Major Accounts Center in Sacramento and its back-up center in San Diego. Initially, the "911" system took a minimum of three seconds for the call to be processed and another three seconds or more before it was answered by the PSAP. SBC introduced the "FS7" Type Network and now it takes 3/10th of a second to process a call.

Until recently, all emergency cellular telephone calls were routed to a local California Highway Patrol (CHP) office on a standard telephone line. Recently, Los Angeles and San Francisco Counties implemented an "Enhanced Wireless 911" system allowing Cingular, Nextel and Verizon to use "911" trunking wireless/cell towers to direct emergency calls to the CHP.

Chairperson Rosenthal stated that the huge influx of cell phone calls has overloaded the CHP with non-traffic related emergency calls which must then be routed to the correct PSAP.

Some cities recommend their residents program the direct telephone number of their cities' police and fire departments into their telephones. Mr. Fryer reported the State agency providing funding to upgrade PSAP equipment, bases funding on the number of calls made to the "911" PSAP using the "911" trunk.

Commissioner Lee inquired if there was a location identification system for emergency cell phone calls. Mr. Fryer reported that providers are able to identify the sector and new technology will allow the provider to identify and provide the PSAP with the approximate location (within a half mile radius). The Torrance Police Department is the only agency in the County that takes its wireless calls directly rather than having it routed through the CHP. Currently, an individual PSAP must send a letter to the State "911" office requesting that they handle their own emergency calls. The FCC has mandated that by October, 2005 all wireless carriers have a ninety-percent saturation of GPS Location Technology located within the handset of cell phones.

One major concern is whether wireless providers have the money necessary to implement changes. Currently, every call made on a land line or cell phone generates a "911" tax. The generated funds are sent to the State and the State's "911" General Services Office distributes those funds back to the PSAPs.

Commissioner Coombs inquired how the Commission would be able to assist in this matter and Chairperson Rosenthal commented that the service to the providers and the change in the routing of these calls falls within the scope of the Commission. Commissioners discussed the routing of calls to the PSAP and whether the transfer of calls from the CHP would be beneficial. Chairperson Rosenthal requested Commissioner Spence discuss the Commission's review of this matter with the directors of his appointing authority.

Chairperson Rosenthal requested Mr. Fryer provide a list of the PSAPs within the County and any contact names that will allow this Commission to begin the process to review the matter. Chairperson Rosenthal thanked Mr. Fryer for an informative presentation and requested Mr. Fryer and the City of Torrance's PSAP representative jointly attend a future meeting for further discussion of this matter.

STUDY COMMITTEE AND TASK FORCE STATUS REPORTS

There were none.

MATTERS NOT ON THE POSTED AGENDA (TO BE PRESENTED AND PLACED ON THE AGENDA FOR A FUTURE MEETING)

There were none.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were none.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:34 a.m.

ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS PRESENT

Richard Rosenthal, Chairperson
Patricia Stitzenberger, Vice Chairperson
Wendy Brogin
Walter Coombs
Shana Epstein
Angela Gibson
Gordon Gray
Errick Lee
Algird Leiga
Kenneth D. Rozell
William Selditz
David Spence

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

Rodrigo A. Guerra, Jr.
Sharon Martinez
Arden F. "Shorty" Feldbush
Edward H.J. Wilson

STAFF

Gene Romig
Ken Wales

GUESTS

Bob Garrott, Assistant General Manager, County Office of Emergency Preparedness

Stephen R. Fryer, Solutions Consultant E911, SBC California

Bruce Staniforth, Executive Director, LAC Citizens' Economy Efficiency Commission